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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PATRIARCH DELLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR  
CHALDEANS

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)  
AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: On February 16, Chaldean Patriarch Emmanuel III Delly told PolOff that conditions for his community were getting worse. He expressed concern about human rights, religious freedom and political representation for Chaldean Catholics in Iraq. He noted that Christians elected to the Council of Representatives were not representative of the Chaldean community. Patriarch Delly stressed the need for a diverse cabinet, one that would include a member of the Chaldean Church. When asked whether there were any Chaldean leaders hoping to serve in leadership positions in the new government, he responded in the negative but pointed to Election Commissioner Farid Ayar as a Chaldean whom he believed could adequately represent the community. Post will remain in touch with the Patriarch and other Chaldean leaders in order to monitor their concerns. End Summary.

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SENSE THAT CONDITIONS ARE WORSE FOR CHALDEANS  
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¶2. (C) Patriarch Delly told PolOff February 16 that conditions for the Chaldean community in Iraq had worsened. Without providing specifics, the Patriarch said he was very concerned with human rights and religious freedoms for his community. A major worry, he underlined, is the livelihood of his parishioners, many of whom he says depend on stores that sell liquor. The Patriarch noted that many of these stores have been targeted and closed despite his perception that the major consumers are Muslims (NOTE: The Patriarch said he did not know who was responsible for the closures but suspected Islamists. END NOTE). The Patriarch said that sectarian violence had become more prominent in Baghdad, and that his community was even more fearful for its safety than the previous year. He cited the recent car bombings outside several Chaldean churches January ¶29.

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CHALDEAN REPRESENTATION IN NEW GOV'T NON-EXISTENT  
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¶3. (C) Patriarch Delly also outlined his complaint about the lack of Chaldean representation in the new government. He expressed his support for a unity government, but told PolOff that a truly representative government should include a Chaldean in a prominent position. When PolOff asked whether there were any Chaldean leaders who would be jockeying for government positions, Patriarch Delly said no. He did, however, point to Election Commissioner Farid Ayar, whom he said he held in high regard. While he acknowledged the presence of Christian representatives in the new parliament, he said that these Christians largely belonged to the Assyrian Church and/or do not represent the Chaldean

community interests. (NOTE: While the Assyrian and Chaldean Churches are historically linked, only the latter is in communion with the Roman Catholic Church.)

14. (C) PolOff noted to the Patriarch the benefits of engaging with other religious leaders as a way to bring Chaldean concerns to the forefront. PolOff suggested that the Patriarch's efforts, as well as the Chaldean community's efforts, to engage in dialogue with other leaders would contribute to the democratic process and would also benefit the Chaldean community. The Patriarch responded by saying that he was not willing to engage in that capacity and that the problem was not with the leaders, but with the "common man." He explained to PolOff that security was an issue, and advocacy could worsen that situation for himself and Chaldean Catholics.

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COMMENT  
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15. (C) Patriarch Delly has become more distressed about conditions for the Chaldean community. Although unable to statistically define the extent to which conditions have worsened for the community, his outlook was decidedly grimmer than during previous visits. Post will continue to meet with Chaldean leaders and encourage them to provide details about security incidents and to engage in dialogue with other communities with whom they have common concerns.  
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